

2 FEB 1970

Approved For Release 2005/08/23 : CIA-RDP88-01350R000200830035-5

ABM Bid Puzzles Reds, Mansfield Says

United Press International

Visiting Soviet journalists are "very perplexed" by U.S. expansion of the antiballistic missile system while the strategic arms limitation talks (SALT) are going on, Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield said yesterday.

Mansfield said after a meeting with 11 high-ranking Soviet journalists on a tour of the United States that they appeared perplexed at the apparent administration contradiction.

Mansfield said he proposed to the writers that the two nations halt further construction of ABM and multiple independently targeted re-entry vehicles (MIRV) but added, "What their reaction was I don't know."

The Montana Democrat suggested Sunday the recent announcement by President Nixon that the ABM system would be expanded could jeopardize the SALT talks.

The newsmen, led by Lev N.

Tolkunov, chief editor of the Soviet government newspaper Izvestia, arrived Sunday in Washington from New Orleans.

(The group yesterday also met with Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman J. W. Fulbright (D-Ark.), House Republican Leader Gerald Ford (Mich.) and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development George Romney. Today they are due to meet Secretary of State William P. Rogers and White House foreign

policy adviser Henry A. Kissinger.)

The Washington office of the Soviet news agency Tass came under picket protest by a student group. The organization called "Washington Committee for Human Rights" picketed in front of the National Press Building, where Tass has an office. It protested what it said was Tass's reneging on a promise to arrange an interview with the visiting journalists to discuss treatment of Jews in Russia.